

2nd DRAFT REPORT

MID-TERM REVIEW OF THE PROGRAMME REGIONAL NETWORKING AND CAPACITY BUILDING INITIATIVE FOR SOUTHERN AFRICA (NETCAB)

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IUCN - The World Conservation Union
Regional Office for Southern Africa

and

United States Agency for International Development
Regional center for Southern Africa

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CHAPTER 2: INTRODUCTION

2.1: Background for the Review

According to the co-operative agreement with USAID a joint programme review by IUCN ROSA and USAID/RCSA has to be conducted in the third year of operation. The purpose of the review is to :

i) Determine whether programme performance and progress has been satisfactory; identify opportunities and constraints, and suggest appropriate improvements to the administrative procedures, institutional roles and responsibilities and technical focus.

ii) Identify priorities for the remaining portion of the five year programme and provide recommendations against these priorities.

The findings of the review will guide the NETCAB Steering Committee, IUCN ROSA and USAID in determining whether the programme should continue into the second phase, and if so, the priority issues to be addressed. The review will be a positive intervention to establish the foundation and direction of the subsequent phase of the programme, and to make any needed adjustment during the current phase of the programme.

2.2: Description of the project

BACKGROUND: The Regional Networking and Capacity Building Initiative (NETCAB) being managed by IUCN's Regional Office for Southern Africa with support from USAID' Regional Centre for Southern Africa is the result of extensive regional consultation on key regional and natural resource management issues in Southern Africa. Separate strategic planning processes initiated by USAID with key stakeholders and by IUCN ROSA with its regional membership resulted in a significant coincidence of interests and approaches between the two organisations. Therefore IUCN and USAID collaborated in the development of the collaborative programme now known as NETCAB. NETCAB was formally launched in November 1995. This section of the report briefly defines the objectives, outputs and implementation approach for the NETCAB programme.

NETCAB's OBJECTIVE: The programme objective is to **Enhance the capacity of southern Africa's government institutions and NGOs to address environment policy and management issues relevant to increasing natural resource productivity through co-ordinated regional initiatives and networks.**

This entails capacity building at community, national and regional levels, and networking in the context of environmental information/education exchange and

other related initiatives. Through NETCAB the above institutions are encouraged and strengthened so as to:

- formulate policies and strategies that are socially, economically and ecologically sustainable,
- support and involve the public, scientific community and industry in development planning, decision making and project implementation,
- deal with trans-boundary environmental issues, and
- identify, assess and report on risks of irreversible damage to ecosystems and threats to survival and well-being of the regional community.

PHASES: The programme is divided into two phases:

Phase 1: October 1995 - September 1998, 3 years

Phase 2: October 1998 - September 2000, 2 years.

Implementation of phase 2 will depend on the outcome of the assessment of phase 1 to be carried out jointly by IUCN ROSA and USAID / RCSA, during the period late 1997 / early 1998.

OUTPUTS: In order to accomplish its objective, the programme aims to achieve the following four main outputs:

- 1: Increased institutional management, technical and networking capacity in specific fields, including community based natural resource management, and terrestrial and aquatic biodiversity conservation;
- 2: Strengthened national and regional capacity for environment policy and strategy development and implementation;
- 3: Increased dialogue, linkages and collaboration between stakeholder groups within countries and throughout the region;
- 4: Improved environmental information, communication and education products and processes which enhance the outreach of a broad range of target groups and raise public awareness.

ACTIVITIES: The programme has funds for both **pre-funded and new activities** that address the objective of NETCAB and has regional impact. The following identify the ten pre-funded activities and lists the lead co-ordinating agencies in parenthesis.

The pre-funded activities

- 1: Regional Capacity Building Network for Southern Africa Botanical Diversity {National Botanical Institute (NBI), South Africa}

- 2: Regional Wildlife Trade Control {(TRAFFIC), Malawi}
- 3: Legal study on trade restriction compensation { IUCN Environmental Law Centre, Germany}
- 4: Southern Africa Sustainable Use Specialist Group {Regional Network linked to IUCN ROSA}
- 5: Short term fellowships and professional exchange {IUCN ROSA}
- 6: Environmental education, communication and education {IUCN ROSA, SADC ELMS, SARDC IMERCSA}
- 7: National Training Programmes for Natural Resource Managers in Southern Africa {IUCN ROSA and National Universities}
- 8: Environmental Economics Capacity Building Programme in Southern Africa {IUCN ROSA}
- 9: Regional Environmental Strategies Network {IUCN ROSA & CESP}, and
- 10: The IUCN ROSA Technical support services {IUCN ROSA}.

New activities

Apart from the pre-funded activities, new activities will be identified in the course of the programme implementation. IUCN members are urged to come up with new activity proposals. All new proposals should be clearly linked with the NETCAB programme objective and one or more of the four main outputs. Besides the new proposals should be in line with the NETCAB Project/Activity format which can be obtained from IUCN ROSA on request. The new activities have to be approved by the NETCAB Steering Committee before funds can be released.

IMPLEMENTATION APPROACH: Implementation of the programme is guided by two basic principles: partnership and complementary. The financial resources under the programme are meant to enable IUCN ROSA, its members and partners to enhance, and develop initiatives and capacities that strengthen the ability of Southern Africa institutions to address the key environmental policy and management issues.

Since in the region there is a high institutional diversity and varying capacities, the programme emphasise the need for co-operation, networking and collaborative implementation of specific activities thereby addressing two critical issues in environmental policy and management in Southern Africa:

- the need to overcome capacity constraints by developing partnerships and joint initiatives at national and regional levels that combine the

strengths and expertise of individual institutions, thereby pursuing a 'learning by doing' approach.

- the promotion of a regional / transboundary approach to managing natural resources (e.g. water, wildlife, erosion) and the development of environmental policy response in the global context of conventions, international trade, etc.

The programme aims to complement and build upon the existing institutional framework (e.g. SADC Co-ordination Units, Government agencies, NGO Networks, academic/research institutions) and their programmatic focus. IUCN ROSA's primary role is that of a catalyst and co-ordinator for a wide range of initiatives and partnership in environmental policy and management issues.

WHO ARE THE BENEFICIARIES OF THE NETCAB PROGRAMME ? The members and partners of IUCN ROSA and the communities striving for the sustainable and equitable use of natural resources and the conservation of biological diversity are the main beneficiaries of this programme.

2.3: Review methodology including the general approach used

2.3.1: Terms of Reference (TOR)

The detailed TOR are give as ANNEX-A of this report. The scope and focus of the review as given in the TOR covers the following:

i) The review needs to assess the performance of the NETCAB programme throughout Southern Africa, within the context of IUCN ROSA's and USAID/RCSA's Strategic Plans for Southern Africa.

ii) The review will focus on:

a) the adequacy of implementation arrangements in achieving theses objectives/outputs, and

b) recommendations for areas of focus to best achieve the programme objectives during the follow-up phase. The review will be a positive intervention to establish the foundation and direction of the subsequent phase of the programme and to make any needed adjustment during the current phase of the programme.

2.3.2: Interpretation of the TOR

Logically, project evaluations should fulfil three major requirements:

- Examine the project strategy, design and plans in terms of logic, completeness and feasibility
- Perform a planned vs. actual comparison of project activities and targets, and
- Discuss findings and make recommendations for the way forward.

The TOR for the mid term Review of NETCAB easily fit into the above three aspects.

2.3.3: Methodology of the Review

The approach employed consists of six main sets of undertaking:

1. Extensive discussions of details and issues of the review among members of the Review Team.
2. Examination of some 100+ different documentation in Harare, Gaborone, Johannesburg, Pretoria and Lilongwe. The documentation included:
 - The Programme Co-operative Agreement
 - IUCN ROSA's and USAID/RCSA's Strategic plans for Southern Africa
 - Budgets
 - Semi-annual workplans
 - Semi-annual progress reports
 - Approved project proposals
 - Contracts with Subgrantees and other institutions
 - Guidelines (Project proposal format, selection criteria, Fellowship, Training, Monitoring and Evaluation), and
 - Monitoring and Evaluation Plan.
3. Individual and group discussions and interviews with officials involved with NETCAB. These officials included:
 - IUCN members and partners who benefited from the programme
 - IUCN members and partners who did not benefit from the programme
 - Co-ordinators of pre-funded activities, Programme Steering Committee members
 - Participants in the regional programme (subgrant activities)
 - Key IUCN staff members (IUCN ROSA Director, IUCN Country Office Representatives, NETCAB Programme Co-ordination Unit, IUCN ROSA Finance Manager)
4. Visits to some establishments and facilities working with NETCAB in Zimbabwe, Botswana, South Africa and Malawi.
5. A short questionnaire addressed to some NETCAB partners in Lesotho, Mozambique, Swaziland, USA and Zambia. The questionnaires were sent to contacts who were later interviewed by telephone, and
6. Presentation and discussion of findings in Harare, mainly with the view of cross-checking on the accuracy of the issues raised and the identification of important aspects which could have been left out of the review.

In particular, the discussions and interviews noted above, revolve around questions such as the following:

- What is NETCAB ?
- What do you consider to be the strengths or strong supporting aspects of NETCAB ?
- What do you regard as the weaknesses of NETCAB ?
- Are there opportunities which NETCAB could take advantage of ?
- What are the main threats facing NETCAB ?
- How does NETCAB relates to NRMP ?
- Can you comment on Project Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation in NETCAB ?
- How would you, on the whole, rate the performance of NETCAB [poor / average / good] ?
- How would you rate the management of NETCAB [poor / average / good] ?
- Can you give some examples of recognisable 'impacts' of NETCAB ?

2.3.4: Examination of the 'Usefulness' of NETCAB

In practice, the issues of efficiency, effectiveness, relevance and impact of a project or programme can be analysed by examining the hierarchy of objectives as given in the design of the project or programme (= first column of the relevant Logical Framework Matrix). The generic relationships for a project's efficiency, effectiveness, relevance and impacts are shown in Figure 1.

GOAL				
PURPOSE				
OUTPUTS				
ACTIVITIES				
	EFFICIENCY	EFFECTIVENESS	RELEVANCE	IMPACT

Figure 1: Log Frame and the relationships for Efficiency, Effectiveness, Relevance and Impact..

In effect, the above scheme depicts the following:

- 1) Efficiency covers the transformation of activities into outputs.
- 2) Effectiveness relates the use of the outputs by the beneficiaries / target groups.

3) Relevance embodies the fact the deliverables (= outputs) are necessary for the subsequent actions of the target groups and thus contributing to the accruing of ultimate 'benefits'.

4) Impact covers the relationship between target groups' actual use of outputs and the derived benefits or overall objective being aimed for by the project or programme.

Using the above scheme, the NETCAB programme was then examined to determine whether:

- The objective (overall goal, project purpose) depicts 'benefits' or impacts, target groups' actions or effects
- The Outputs / Results show deliverables
- The activities are necessary and sufficient for the achievement of the outputs
- The performance indicators are specific enough to successfully guide programme monitoring and evaluation during implementation, and
- The monitoring of important assumptions dealing with external aspects could be successfully accomplished.

2.4: Structure of the report

The rest of this report is divided into seven chapters, namely:

- Chapter 3; Project relevance
- Chapter 4; Efficiency
- Chapter 5; Effectiveness
- Chapter 6; Impact of the project
- Chapter 7; Sustainability
- Chapter 8: Lessons learned, and
- Chapter 9; Conclusions and recommendations.

In addition, the following are given as annexes:

- Terms of Reference (Annex-A),
- Itinerary for the review team (Annex-B),
- List of persons consulted (Annex-C),
- Questionnaire sent to persons interviewed by telephone (Annex-D),
- List of documents referred to (Annex-E).

CHAPTER 3: PRPROGRAMME RELEVANCE

The IUCN ROSA programmatic approach is proactive, mission led, participatory and innovative on issues of sustainability and the exploration of new possibilities in natural resource management. The IUCN Southern Africa Programme is defined and implemented by the Union's 60 members as well as sub-regional commission networks and other relevant partners.

In early 1994 the IUCN Regional Office for Southern AFRICA (IUCN ROSA) and the USAID Bureau for Africa began a dialogue on key Environmental and Natural Resources management issues in the Southern African region as part of USAID's consultations with stakeholders in the development of the initiative for Southern Africa (ISA). The dialogue led to the realisation of a significant coincidence of interests and approaches between the two organisations, and the identification of IUCN as a potential key partner in the ISA. IUCN and USAID began to explore scenarios and opportunities for the development of a collaborative programme. Such collaboration was to combine the objectives of IUCN's work in the region with the objectives and resources of the new USAID 'Initiative for Southern Africa' (USAID/ISA). Over the course of 1994 and 1995 a number of meetings and workshops were held at which the criteria and parameters for such an undertaking was established.

NETCAB was conceived and designed within the above background. And, it is within this frame conditions that the relevance of the programme to current and emergent environmental policies and management issues are to be examined. Further, as already highlighted in chapter 2, section 2.3.4, the relevance of the programme can be examined in the context of its deliverables (= outputs) being used or adopted by the intended target groups or beneficiaries in their endeavours directed at achieving the overall objective.

3.1: Rationale and Context of the Project at its Inception

The mission statement for the IUCN in Southern Africa is "To facilitate and strengthened an integrated approach for the sustainable and equitable use of natural resources and the conservation of biological diversity". The focus of the ROSA programme has, for some years been on developing its capacity as a local catalyst, facilitator, service provider, regional and global networks, technical resources centre and partner to initiatives emanating from within the region. As part of its global and regional objective, IUCN provides leadership and high quality technical advice on key natural resource management issues to its members and partners throughout the world. In addition to its technical role, IUCN ROSA also plays a backstopping role in administrative and financial management by acting as a platform for linking the international donor community with local institutions

The mechanisms and modes of operation adopted by the organisation have “multiplier effects” that enhance regional effectiveness, ecological-social integration, self-sustaining activities by working through IUCN staff (assisting local development of projects including demonstration projects; providing advice and administering support to communities; seeking, assessing, and developing opportunities for member involvement and capturing lessons from these project experiences) and IUCN members, thereby enhancing co-operative planning and activities among members, capacity building for members particularly through opportunities for participation in field-based and regional activities, and lastly through partner organisations that provide added value to the union’s programme.

The challenge that IUCN ROSA faced prior to the implementation of NETCAB was the need to consolidate its service to the growing regional membership, establish priorities against the increasing demands for the regional programme support and ensure its management and financial capacity remains sound in the face of such demands.

The August 1992 Membership Conference highlighted the need for a strong communication and networking as prerequisites to the success of the Union’s work in the region.

The NETCAB programme proposal was developed on the basis of two basic principles that will drive its implementation - **partnership and complementarity**. The financial resources provided by USAID/ISA under the NETCAB programme enables IUCN ROSA, its members and partners to enhance, expand and develop initiatives and capacities that form part of a broader strategy to strengthen the ability of Southern African institutions to address key environmental policy and management issues. The programme further assumes that IUCN’s primary role in this is one of catalyst and co-ordinator for a wide range on initiatives and partnerships that address the specific issues identified below.

Programme concept and design reflect the institutional diversity and capacity found in the region. It thus emphasises the need for co-ordination, networking and collaborative implementation of specific activities thereby addressing two critical issues:

- The need to overcome capacity constraints by developing partnerships and joint initiatives at a national and regional level that combine the strengths and expertise of individual institutions - thereby pursuing a ‘Learning by Doing’ approach, and
- The promotion of a regional transboundary approach to managing natural resources (e.g. water, wildlife, erosion) and the development of environmental policy responses in the global context of conventions, international trade, etc.

The programme aims to complement and build upon the existing institutional frameworks (i.e. SADC Co-ordination Units, government agencies, NGO networks, academic/research capacities) and their programmatic foci by focusing on four key areas: 1) capacity building and institutional development; 2) policy analysis and strategy development, 3) regional networks and policy fora / workshops; and 4) environmental information, communication and education.

The programme reinforces IUCN ROSA's capacity to provide the kinds of policy inputs, fora for regional dialogue and networking services that are central to the mandate defined by its membership in the region. In terms of USAID/ISA, the programme provides a strong regional input which complements the more specific objectives defined under USAID/ISA 'agriculture and natural resources component', both in the form of substantive policy and programme advice as well as through the provision of a wide range of fora for dialogue and expert input to guide the evolution of the USAID/ISA.

The implementation period of this programme has been sub divided into two phases - an initial phase of three years (starting date October 1995) concluded with a joint USAID/IUCN ROSA assessment of the programme; followed by a further 2 years phase depending on the outcome of the assessment.

IUCN's Southern Africa Programme is built around a strategy based on capacity building. The programme is focused on the following activities and inputs:

- The development of joint activities with members and partners to strengthen locally initiated programmes and institutions;
- The provision of training inputs and programmes in natural resource management, environmental impact assessment, participatory processes, communication skills and project identification and design;
- The provision of fora for national and inter-regional dialogue, networking debate and conflict resolution; and
- The provision of assistance in accessing funds, and establishing and maintaining professional relations with various financing sources through administration and financial support services.

Process and Programme Development:

Strategic Planning Process

In response to the ongoing dialogue with USAID under the Initiative for Southern Africa, as well as the challenges posed by the growing programme and membership in a period of management transition, IUCN ROSA initiated a fully participatory strategic planning process with its membership. The strategic plan was finalised with inputs from the Regional Membership Conference which was held in Malawi from 7 - 8 December 1995.

The strategic planning process was designed to capture the membership's vision of IUCN's operation in the Southern Africa region in the 21st Century, a framework for the 1997 - 99 Triennium Programme, and consensus on the short term programmatic and management objectives for the 1996 programme and workplan. The process identified potential partners for the various activity groups and programme concepts that emerge, as well as complementary roles for the various institutions and individuals making up IUCN's constituency in Southern Africa.

3.2: Changes in Project Context during Implementation

As is well appreciated by the collaborating partners, NETCAB is a programme that was developed in a hurry to meet certain target time schedules. As a result, some of the components of the programme were not well thought out and analysed. This meant that some changes has to be made during the programme implementation. The following are the changes that occurred in the project context:

- The fellowship component to be undertaken in the USA, co-ordinated by WRI was changed and the implementation was effected in the region, although WRI maintained some input.
- The focus and emphasis of the pre-funded activities changed slightly when the co-ordinators of the pre-funded activities were asked by the PSC to re-look at their components.
- The training component was supposed to follow the USAID manual which most subgrantees found complicated, hence the requirement to use the manual was waived.
- In the original proposal there was no requirement to carry out pre-award audit. This was introduced during implementation and this somewhat delayed the implementation of the programme.
- The office running cost budget line was absent in the original programme and this was latter introduced to cater for the PCU requirements.
- The environmental education component was introduced after some recommendations and interest from the region.
- The strategies component of the programme changed its original general focus to more concise focus on pertinent issues such as land.
- The budget time frames of some components changed, e.g. SASSUG, and
- Attempts were made to develop a monitoring and evaluation plan, the implementation of which will expedite data and information collection for programme impact analysis.

3.3: Relevance of NETCAB in relation to IUCN ROSA and USAID/RCSA

Strategic Plans for the region

Before addressing the programme's fit, it is appropriate to list the strategic objectives of the two organisations and briefly discuss sections of these.

USAID/RCSA Strategic Objective 3

The relevant strategic objective from USAID/RCSA is the strategic Objective 3, (SO 3), namely:

Increased agricultural productivity and sustained management of natural resource base.

IUCN ROSA Strategic Objectives

- 1. Promote the conservation of biological diversity through the sustainable use of natural resources,*
- 2. Develop the capacity to facilitate the resolution of resource based conflicts and to advocate for policy changes,*
- 3. Promote a participatory approach to community based natural resource management,*
- 4. Advocate for sustainable land use and the development of effective environmental management,*
- 5. Develop and implement a system for gathering, analysing and disseminating information relevant to regional members,*
- 6. Facilitate broad based partnerships through co-ordinated and effective disbursement of donor support,*
- 7. develop appropriate administrative systems for the efficient operation of the regional office, and*
- 8. Improve the financial management systems of the regional office in line with changes in development assistance, laws, and economic and institutional trends.*

Based on the examination of RCSA's strategic plan. entitled "Regional Integration Through Partnership and Participation" (approved in mid-1997) and the review of the "IUCN Southern Africa Strategic Plan" dated April 1997, it can be stated that there is substantial complementarity between the two plans.

There are two components of the RCSA's strategic plan which are applicable in the NETCAB programme (the "Programme"):

First, USAID's strategic Objective 3 is to accelerate the regional adoption of sustainable agriculture and natural resources management approaches. Two of the Objective's three intermediate results are directly addressed by the Programme, i.e. IR 1: functioning systems in place for transforming Ag/NRM technologies and best practices across the region, and IR 2: an enabling environment that provides increased incentives for smallholders and communities to adopt sustainable Ag/NRM technologies and approaches.

Second, the RCSA's Special Objective A; "Increased regional capacity to manage transboundary natural resources (TBNR)- also is addressed directly by the Programme. Indeed, the results from the many and diverse interviews conducted during the review clearly indicate the current importance this topic holds with many organisations and principal change agents involved in the sector. All three of the Objective's intermediate results, in fact, are being, or will be addressed by the programme, i.e., IR 1: regional institutions strengthened, IR 2: national capacity to address TRNR management issues increased, and IR 3: models for improved TBNR management developed.

Before leaving USAID's side of the equation, however, it should be mentioned that, while special Objective B was not reviewed in detail, it is very clear from the findings of the review team that the monitoring and evaluation of the RCSA's programme on a regional basis is critical to the successful demonstration of NETCAB's performance. This issue will be addressed more fully in another section of the review.

With regards to IUCN's strategic plan, its overall Mission Statement for the Southern Africa region clearly demonstrates the excellent fit with the RCSA's vision - "...to facilitate and strengthen an integrated approach for the sustainable and equitable use of natural resources and the conservation of biological diversity".

Of the eight of the IUCN' Regional Strategic Objectives listed above, it can be stated that the first six are all within the programmatic intentions of the NETCAB Programme, while the last two are, in fact, special administrative and financial systems objectives which are included as elements of the Co-operative Agreement between the two parties.

Returning now to how well do the NETCAB Programme priorities fit with both organisations' strategies, the answer is **VERY WELL**. According to IUCN's Programme Proposal, the stated objective of the Programme is:

Enhanced capacity of Southern Africa's governments and NGOs to address environmental policy and management issues relevant to increasing natural resource productivity through co-ordinated regional initiatives and networks.

Without detailing herein the Programme's four outputs, it can be seen that the thrust of the programme, with its special emphasis on regional networking, is in close conformance with both institutions' strategies and priorities. As will be addressed later, the transition to the recommended phase 2 (facilitated by an end of phase 1 conference) will enable both organisations to re-examine and adjust this apparently excellent "fit"

3.4: Overall Relevance of NETCAB

Within the context of the foregoing considerations and particularly that 'relevance' is examined in the context of usefulness of the outputs of the programme, the review team found that NETCAB is very highly relevant for tackling recognised capacity and networking shortfalls in environmental policy and management issues in Southern Africa. The programme successfully translates several important components captured in both the IUCN ROSA and USAID/ISA strategic plans into practice, in an exceptionally vivid manner. ALL the members and partners interviewed, who have benefited from NETCAB, find the outputs of the programme relevant for their own activities in the environmental sector.

CHAPTER 4: PROGRAMME EFFICIENCY

Efficiency relates outputs to inputs (activities), see chapter 2, section 2.3.4 (Figure 1). It basically says how best the resources available to the programme have been utilised in producing the programme outputs. Clearly, efficiency revolves around how active project implementers have been.

4.1: Project progress compared to workplans

It is important to address this question by first acknowledging that NETCAB is a very ambitious and demanding programme to successfully implement. Not only are there a variety of different NGOs and governmental implementers (at different levels of capacity) but there is also the regionality aspect, which is complicated not only by distance and often poor communications, but also sometimes by different languages.

Additionally, it is important to recognise (as is the case for both the Agreement's parties) that more could have been done by IUCN and the USAID/RCSA at the beginning of the programme to significantly facilitate a more smooth and rapid implementation. This could have happened, for instance, had both IUCN ROSA and USAID/RCSA invested some efforts at the start to undertake detailed 'Induction' meetings / training with NETCAB staff and partners. This conclusion is drawn from the fact that almost ALL the interviewees expressed views that they would have benefited greatly from such start-up induction meetings.

It should be noted that backstopping and support meetings were later arranged beginning in the second half of the first programme year. This was in response to expressed needs for such assistance, particularly with respect to financial management. It is the view of the review team that several potential subgrantees could have also benefited from early induction into the management and procedures that were being put in place for NETCAB.

Arrangements for implementation: Having said that, there have been a variety of concerns raised during the course of this review. The concept behind the overall structure for the Programme's implementation and specifically the establishment of both the PCU and PSC is very sound. What has been learned, however, is that certain aspects of the structure have been hampered by both internal and external forces stemming from the tendency to regard NETCAB as just another source of funding. This is demonstrated, for instance, by the fact that several applicants virtually rushed on to submit proposals without first of all appreciating the details given in the relevant guidelines.

A major lesson here is that it should never be assumed that the process of information dissemination is complete by simply delivering documents to potential partners.

With respect to the PCU, it appears that the staff have been able to balance a very large and continually expanding workload with its own successful internal capacity building efforts. However, the efficiency of the Unit has been significantly constrained in a number of ways by the diversion of the majority of the very capable Programme Assistant's time to routine administrative and secretarial tasks. The requirements of the Unit and the heavy load being carried by the excellent PCU Programme manager demands that the Programme Assistant fulfil the role which is called for in her scope of work.

The review team found very substantial evidence of what the PCU, in conjunction with the IUCN's two technical units (i.e., The Environmental Information and Communication Programme, and the Regional Institutional Development Programme), have been able to accomplish during the project's first phase - their collective achievements are very commendable.

With additional secretarial / administrative capacity, both the Programme Manager and the Programme Assistant could have devoted more time to publicising the programme and in rendering programmatic assistance to partners.

Regarding the PSC, it is very evident that it too has assumed a very significant and substantive role in the Programme's implementation. The PSC convened three times each in 1996 and 1997 and addressed a wide variety of topics. As its role has evolved, however questions have arisen among several NETCAB stakeholders (including some interviewees), as to the degree to which the PSC has assumed a much greater than desired role in the review and approval of project proposals. Given the length of the more recent meetings (one and one half days each), the question of efficiency and effective utilisation of the PSC's senior human resources arises.

Several of the interviewees complained that the PSC suggested 'many' modifications to their original project proposals. This led to situations where the proposals which were finally approved did not quite reflect what the applicants had originally intended. In one case an interviewee mentioned that the 'cost' of finally getting their proposal to a standard acceptable to the PSC was equivalent to a high proportion of the grant they eventually received. Two important implications of the foregoing are:

- Clearly the PSC thoroughly reviews the various proposals and even suggests areas for improvements. The question is: should the PSC invest so much effort in reviewing proposals? The review team believes that it should not. The proposals should best be polished up at the PCU level, before they get submitted to the PSC, and
- The lengthy and detailed reviews of proposals contribute to lengthy PSC meetings. This is clearly an inefficient use of the high valued time of PSC members.

As addressed later, the proposed end-of-phase 1 workshop should encourage the examination of the PSC's terms of reference and composition, and suggest ways by which it can maximise the strengths of its members.

Along with the PCU, the IUCN's two technical units have been on the front lines in terms of implementing specific components within the Programme's four major outputs. The levels of their efforts and commitment to the Programme's objectives are very high. Their efficiency in delivering the intended services through workshops, training, and technical assistance is undoubtedly complicated by the dual roles they play within IUCN, i.e., not all their work is NETCAB related. While recognising this fact, it is nonetheless important for the PCU to continue to assure that the two units function collaboratively amongst themselves with the PCU, and with other related IUCN projects (e.g. NRMP) in order to preclude any redundant activities and insure a high degree of synergy.

Subgrantees: Lastly, mention must be made of the various subgrantees and the important roles they have played in the Programme's implementation. From the interviews conducted with a diverse group of grant recipients, the clear impression was that there is a significant range of institutional capacities within the group of grantees, and that their levels of achievement and impacts have not been monitored and recorded to the extent desired. Consequently it is difficult to accurately measure their respective efficiency, although there is no doubt that the PCU staff have a reasonable understanding of this through their routine grant monitoring and review of semi-annual progress reports. This is another area where the full and timely implementation of the M&E plan is essential.

Proposals review process: Concerning the process of reviewing and awarding new grants and fellowships, there appears to be some issues regarding the depth of the substantive engagement of the PSC in the review and approval of the new grant proposals. While recognising the desire and, indeed, the responsibility of the PSC to assure any proposal's compliance with the Programme's stated parameters for financial support, it would be appropriate to re-evaluate the PSC's terms of reference in this regard. This examination will not only look at the grant proposal and approval process but would consider other areas in which the expertise of the PSC could be more fully utilised.

New Activities: With respect to new activity proposals and fellowships actually reviewed and approved by the PSC, the review team was presented a summary document which lists the dates of each PSC meeting and the projects approved or disapproved during that respective session. The first PSC meeting to consider such activities was, in fact, the third PSC meeting held on September 5-6 1996. Overall, of the 30 new activities and fellowships presented for the PSC's consideration, 17 were approved. Of the 17 approvals, one was for a fellowship (a SABONET-related participant from Angola to train in Portugal), and of the 13 disapprovals, two were for fellowships.

43% of the submitted proposals were not approved because they failed to meet the NETCAB criteria. Additional effort should therefore be put into effective dissemination of NETCAB's criteria to potential partners

On a related topic, the team members noted that the majority of the approved grants were for IUCN members. While this is, indeed, a recognised focus of the Programme, the opportunities for expansion beyond the membership should be encouraged. This could further enhance the strength of the membership network while creating greater synergy within the overall community and reducing redundant activities.

Minutes of PSC meetings: The comprehensive minutes of the PSC meetings do a commendable job of presenting the decisions and comments / recommendations for each proposal considered by the Committee. What is also clearly evident from this process is the very substantial effort undertaken by the PCU to handle the preparatory and conclusionary work related to each proposal. Here again, the issue over having both PCU Programme Manager and Programme Assistant fully engaged substantively in this process is of utmost importance. As discussed earlier, the programme Assistant appears to be expending too much time on the purely administrative/secretarial aspects of the review and approval process.

4.2: Results in relation to resource utilisation

As noted above, only one of the three proposed fellowships was approved by the PSC. Here also, the rejection of two fellowship proposals was due to the fact that they did not meet the NETCAB criteria. It is, however, very clear from the actual number of considered proposals that more has to be done within IUCN ROSA office, IUCN members and its partners to stimulate the development, review and approval of fellowship proposals. The review team was later informed that a number of action have been taken to address the shortage of fellowship proposals, but that more has to be done.

Subgrantees: The semi-annual progress reports contained detailed narratives of activities undertaken versus those captured in the workplans. From these, the team concluded that subgrantees have done quite well in implementing their respective activities. Also, from the review team's substantial number of interviews, it is very clear that the PCU has been an integral component of the institutions' entire project cycle and their liaison with the PSC. Grant recipients are evidently dedicated to their projects and conscientious about their activity monitoring and reporting requirements. However, credit also must be given to the rigor of IUCN ROSA's review, approval and monitoring system, which includes financial management as discussed below.

Some of the lessons learned to date include:

- Every effort must be made for subgrantees to fully appreciate the procedures and requirement of NETCAB very early in their involvement with the programme. This will for instance, assist in timely submission of reports to the PCU.
- So far, the various training mounted by subgrantees, appears to be an end in themselves once the course evaluation is completed at the end of the course. Follow-up on what use participants have made of the knowledge and skills gained from the various training courses should always be undertaken.

Development of an M&E Plan: There are two significant points to be made about the M& Plan. First, it has to be acknowledged that the majority of the individual institutions have their own formal or informal systems for monitoring and evaluating their projects progress. Unfortunately, as noted earlier, the size and maturity of the recipient institutions greatly impacts the sophistication and capacity of these systems. That fact was evident during the interviews.

While work had actually begun on the M&E plan in early 1996, it is unfortunate that the plan's development did not occur much sooner in the Programme's implementation. The impact of this delay is evident in terms of the postponed establishment of standards of measurement "verifiable indicators" and the capturing of early impact data.

Unfortunately, the M&E plan as it stands still require further work on more definitive variable indicators (in terms of quantities, quality and times) to enable programme impacts to be authoritatively measured. For instance the indicators given for the programme objective refer to "...improved knowledge..", "... improved skills..", etc. As will be discussed in chapter 6 on impacts (See Section 6.2), the programme objective as specified in the programme documents is in fact a summary of the programme outputs, and as such systematic provision has not been made for the measuring of impacts (= use of outputs, and benefits thereof).

Looking to the future, however, it is especially noteworthy that IUCN ROSA and its members are expecting to benefit this year from a replacement for the M&E facilitator to further the collective efforts undertaken in 1997. A review of the current M&E plan demonstrates that very substantial effort went into the identification of the specific activities, creation of the respective variable indicators, and means of verification. The recipient institutions should now be utilising the plan to monitor their own activities, and every effort should be made by the PCU and PSC to reinforce the importance of establishing, maintaining and reporting on their M&E systems.

The review team was informed that USAID/RCSA had an opportunity to participate in this initial exercise and hopefully will be able to do so again with the upcoming work on M&E. The added advantage of USAID/RCSA participation is

that they would be able to introduce the elements of their special objective B on monitoring and evaluation on a regional basis to the responsible contractor.

4.3: Overall Efficiency of Programme implementation

On the whole, the review team concluded that implementation of NETCAB to date has been undertaken in a remarkably efficient manner. The PCU is overworked, but has mostly managed to meet set deadlines and stay within agreed upon budgets. Clearly, the two technical units (i.e., The Environmental Information and Communication Programme, and the Regional Institutional Development Programme), have also performed their individual scheduled activities efficiently. In the same sense, the PSC, and subgrantees have all diligently gone about the implementation of their respective activities.

The concerns noted deal basically with the delays (late submission of reports) and sometimes extra efforts (PCU having to repeatedly chase some subgrantees for reports, which then gets submitted only at the last minute). Some of these could have been avoided had much more thought been given to both the programme design and M&E plan at the start of implementation.

CHAPTER 5: PROGRAMME EFFECTIVENESS

Effectiveness covers the use of programme outputs, see chapter 2, section 2.3.4 (Figure 1). It basically concerns the usefulness of the programme deliverables to the programme's target groups. The more target group needs oriented a programme deliverables are, the more effective the programme can be regarded. Effectiveness reflects the interface between the interventions as planned and undertaken by project personnel and the suitability of these interventions to the requirements posed by the beneficiaries / target groups.

5.1: Expected achievement of objectives when the project was designed

As discussed elsewhere in this report, the design of the programme was undertaken in a somewhat hurried fashion. As such, complete provision for measuring the expected achievement of the objectives was not made. For instance, it has also been mentioned that work on the M&E plan was started only after programme implementation has been going on for over a year.

The above notwithstanding, both the capacity building and networking objectives were consistently aimed for by the various stakeholders during the implementation of the different activities.

5.2: Actual or expected achievement of objectives at the time of the review

The fact that indicators for the achievement of the objectives were not systematically set at the start of programme implementation did not quite hinder the achievement of the objectives, particularly at the output level. The training workshops, for instance, were all completed with participants being asked to complete evaluation forms. The details in the forms were later systematically taken into account in subsequent training courses. A good example of this situation was the six-week course organised by SABONET. Participants expressed the view that with six weeks, the course was 'too long'. This was later taken into account and a shorter two-week course with emphasis on hands-on was put in place.

The achievement of IUCN ROSA internal capacity building objectives were to a very great extent fully achieved, particularly in the area of financial management. Interviewees complained about the high degree of efforts necessary for becoming conversant with the required financial management practices. But, almost without exception, views were expressed as to the usefulness of the stringent measures accompanying financial management.

Also, some of the subgrantees complained about the long drawn out process involved in getting their respective project proposals into the final acceptable forms. They, however, acknowledged the fact that the exercise was worth

undertaking as this clearly contributed to their own capacity building in the area of formulation of project proposals.

5.3: Effectiveness of the existing implementation procedures

Included within the more than 40 interviews were a number of participants who had attended workshops, as well as senior representatives of organisations which have received grants. The following points are based on those interviews, the examination of related documents and discussions held among the three review team members.

While there was a fair range of divergence of opinion when it came to the efficiency of the system and procedures to conduct workshops or receive grants, there was a substantial consensus of opinion when it came to the effectiveness of those mechanisms in achieving the programme objectives. That assessment however is not fully substantiated by documentation because of the significance absence of evaluation and impact information.

On the grant side, however, their effectiveness becomes a bit more unsubstantiated. In part, this is due to the fact that the most grants are either now approaching their conclusion or are simply still too early in their process of implementation. Unfortunately, the delay in IUCN ROSA and its affiliates in addressing the monitoring and evaluation aspects of the programme's implementation undoubtedly has had an adverse delaying effect on the ability of all parties to document the effectiveness of their grants. Nonetheless, there is a clear sensitivity among all parties regarding the importance of capturing and reporting on effectiveness and impact. Indeed, the very presence of the review team and its discussions with the interviewees has certainly increased the profile of this important aspect of the Programme's implementation. As the team was advised that there will be a replacement facilitator for M&E this year (1998) to continue the initial and substantial efforts begun last year, there is confidence among all parties that this subject will receive greater attention.

The review team got some evidence of the effectiveness of certain grants from some of the interviewees. In one instant the supervisor of a course participant from a Herbarium was very impressed with the improved work performance demonstrated by the said participant after his return from a NETCAB supported training course. Ironically, the supervisor now entertain fears of losing the participant in question to other employers.

Lastly, in light of the earlier reference to the RCSA's Special Objective B to monitor and evaluate on a regional basis, it is believed to be an opportune time to bring together the efforts of RCSA's Special Objective B team with that of IUCN ROSA and its affiliates. The timely harmonisation of IUCN's and RCSA's M&E efforts would undoubtedly be very beneficial to both parties.

Reporting: The review team recognised that the participating institutions have been doing a reasonably good job of reporting on their respective activities. The semi-annual composite progress reports and the workplans presented by the PCU are very helpful in understanding the primary planned and actual activities of the various parties. Two areas needing attention, however, are noted.

First, the participating institutions and, in turn, the PCU need to continue to focus on the timely submission of their respective reports. Second, while the delay in the M&E plan has had an adverse effect upon the earlier reporting of impact data, the progress reports must now begin to go beyond the reporting of traditional input and output information (e.g. X number of computers provided and Y number of workshops held), and begin to present some real examples for the intended beneficiaries. Obviously, the individual institution's own monitoring and evaluation system will fully capture all aspects of their programme's activities, but it would be valuable for some of the most salient facts from that system to be brought forward into its semi-annual report to the PCU.

Financial procedures: Financial procedures in place are adequate with respect to timely reporting, budgeting, disbursements and account management. The road to achieving this level of competent has, however, not been easy. From all sides (USAID/RCSA, IUCN ROSA, Subgrantees), it appears that an initial training session, directed by RCSA, might have significantly lessened the earlier difficulties encountered by IUCN and its sub-grantees.

Nonetheless, significant progress has been made and all parties now seem to feel comfortable with the procedures. In fact, without exception, all the people involved in this aspect of the Programme's implementation within IUCN and the sub-grantees acknowledged that USAID's financial system is excellent.

There is, however, room for improvement on all sides. First, the sub-grantees need to submit the required documents to the PCU on a more timely basis and with more accurate advanced projections. Second, the PCU needs to continue their direct support of the recipient institutions, especially those which are new to the rigorous USAID system. The considerable effort that was made by the USAID/RCSA Contracts and Financial Management staff to explain procedures and grant provisions to IUCN staff, both in Gaborone and in Harare is greatly appreciated by NETCAB. The PCU should however continue to take advantage of the support from RCSA's Controller's office whenever there are issues which could benefit from their insight. Lastly, the PCU needs to properly screen the sub-grantees' submissions (e.g. advance requests) before they are transmitted to the RCSA.

With regards to audits, there were significant problems related to the indirect costs rate which warrant the attention of senior members of IUCN and the RCSA. It is understood that this issue has now been resolved.

On a related matter, the review team inquired about the anticipated US\$750,000 grantee contribution for phase 1 and the means by which IUCN was tracking it. While it was apparent that there was a requirement, there also has not been much done to systematise the compilation of this information. The team suggested that this also become a discussion point with the RCSA and with the audit firm. Lastly, the team members noted the idea that the required grantee contribution could be inclusive of related contributions made by IUCN's sub-grantees. This should be discussed and verified accordingly.

5.4: Factors and processes affecting achievement of objectives

The design of the programme did not explicitly capture external factors which might influence the achievement of the objectives. As such the achievements of the objectives are basically dependent on a host of 'internal' factors. The diverse levels of capacities of the sub-grantees has already been mentioned. Consequently, the achievement of the various objectives depends greatly on the situation characterising the sub-grantees. There is clear demonstration of enthusiasm by the parties for their respective activities. This is a major contributing factor for the achievement of the objectives of the Programme.

The same considerations as given in the last paragraph can be used to account for the internal processes in operation in the various institutions participating in NETCAB. In cases where the processes are not supportive of the achievement of the objectives, they would invariably be targets for capacity building. As such it is to be expected that the various processes would, in fact, contribute positively to the achievement of Programme objectives.

The review has at least awakened the realisation of the need for systematic data and information collection for impact analysis of the Programme. The processes inherent in the implementation of the M&E system will also be supportive of the achievement of the Programme's objectives.

5.5: Programme Effectiveness as a whole

Looked at from the viewpoint of usefulness of outputs, the outputs of NETCAB to date have already proved to be very popular and useful to the various NETCAB partners and sub-grantees. A good example here is the 'Donor profile' compiled under NETCAB. The PCU has already received several letters from satisfied partners and network members who have found the publication to be invaluable. The management and administrative procedures put in place for NETCAB have proved to be functional and adequate for the programme's implementation. The PCU and NETCAB affiliates must however make concerted efforts at publicising the Programme more extensively. Finally, as the programme M&E plan is completed and the subgrantees and other NETCAB implementers concentrate on systematic data and information collection it would become easier to clearly establish the effectiveness of the programme.

CHAPTER 6: IMPACT OF THE PROGRAMME

6.1: Objectives hierarchy for NETCAB

The hierarchy of objectives for NETCAB as given in the programme document is as follows:

Objective: Enhanced capacity of Southern Africa's government institutions and NGOs to address environmental policy and management issues relevant to increasing natural resource productivity through co-ordinated regional initiatives and networking

In order to accomplish the above objective, the programme aims to achieve four major outputs:

- Output-1:** Increased institutional management, technical and networking capacity in specific fields, including community based natural resource management, and terrestrial and aquatic biodiversity conservation [Management]
- Output-2:** Strengthened national and regional capacity for environmental policy and strategy development and implementation [Policy and strategy]
- Output-3:** Increased dialogue, linkages and collaboration between stakeholder groups within countries and throughout the region [Networking]
- Output-4:** Improved environmental information, communication and education products and processes which enhance the outreach of a broad range of target groups and raise public awareness [Information, Education and Communication].

A collection of activities are aligned to the outputs.

6.2: Interpretation of NETCAB objectives hierarchy

A major question examined during the review is: 'how does the major outputs (components) fit into the whole ?' The NETCAB hierarchy of objectives employs a 3-level format, namely; Objective, major outputs and activities. Looked at closely, the programme objective is, in fact, a summary of the major outputs, and NOT a higher level of objective, the achievement of which will be made possible by the delivering of the outputs. For instance, 'enhanced capacity of government institutions and NGOs' includes 'increased institutional management, technical and networking capacity in specific fields'.

Further, a re-examination of the programme objective shows that three levels have been condensed into one. Consider the following:

Objective: Enhanced capacity of Southern Africa's government institutions and NGOs to address environmental policy and management issues relevant to increasing natural resource productivity through co-ordinated regional initiatives and networking

The objective can be broken down into:

Level-1: Increasing natural resource productivity (what benefits from NETCAB and for whom ?). Normally for the targeted communities !

Level-2: Enhanced capacity to address environmental policy and management issues (why NETCAB ?)

Level-3: Co-ordinated regional initiatives and networking (how NETCAB ?)

Clearly, the major outputs noted above (summarised as management, policy and strategy, networking, and information, education & communication), are not contributing to achieving the objective, rather they are constituent parts of the objective as stated in the programme design. In other words, the objective as stated is simply a SUMMARY of the four major outputs. This is a design flaw.

Also, it appears that some important deliverables necessary for leading to 'increasing natural resource productivity', for example, capital resources and production systems, are missing from the major outputs. At the same time the 'missing' outputs are not accounted for by relevant important assumptions in the programme design.

An inherent flaw in the NETCAB programme objective as presented in the programme document, is that since the different parts are condensed, their achievements cannot be individually noted and measured.

The primary and other outputs are all concentrated on such details:

- Number of people trained
- Number of workshops held, and
- Number of publications produced.

These are all measures of 'deliverables', or as are rightly described in the programme, 'outputs'. No provision was made in the programme design to measure 'what has been done with the outputs' (= purpose), or what 'benefits' are to be derived from making use of the outputs (= overall goal). As such, it is not surprising that the data for assessing 'impacts' were not systematically collected, (cf. Figure 1, in section 2.3.4).

6.3: Expected and unexpected impact on target groups

With the above consideration (section 6.2) in mind, the reviewers consciously brought up the question of impacts with almost all persons interviewed. With the exception of a few organisation working directly with local level communities (ART and AZTREC) most stakeholders interviewed could not immediately highlight impacts of their project work on communities. As noted above, this is mainly due to the fact that systematic provision has not been made for collecting data and information on impacts at the community level.

The above characterisation, notwithstanding, interviewees gave some account of cases where positive impacts could be attributed to NETCAB. We give two examples here:

- The work of TRAFFIC with ivory stock management systems could easily lead to a situation where the benefits to given local communities from the sale of ivory, can be successfully monitored.
- The enthusiasm with which some local communities, led by chiefs reached by AZTREC and ART, are beginning to articulate their views on environmental policy and management issues.

It is the view of the review team that there are already indications of positive impacts of NETCAB on some local communities. Unexpected impacts on local communities were not recorded by the implementers and not recognised by the review team.

6.4: Expected and unexpected impacts at the institutional level

The emphasis placed in the implementation of the programme to date has been on the production of planned outputs by both IUCN ROSA and collaborating partners. The number of outputs (training workshops, number of people trained, number of publications, etc.) is quite impressive. Unlike the question with impact at the community level, there are many examples of impacts at the institutional level, even though data on these have not been systematic collected.

Some positive impacts at the institutional level include:

- SABONET implied (although not said in so many words) that they have been able to successfully access GEF funding because NETCAB provided the opportunity for them to develop a focused approach to networking,
- The procedures for completing and getting a project proposal approved are apparently quite demanding. Several institutions, on hindsight, now believe that the process had helped them sharpened their project formulation skills, and
- Similarly, the rigorous financial management requirements in NETCAB and USAID has visibly contributed to improved accounting systems in some institutions, including IUCN ROSA.

Unfortunately, here also, the collection of data and information on impacts were not systematically planned for. In order to overcome this shortfall, the M&E plan must be completed and made operational as soon as possible. The following are some suggestions as to how to go about planning for capturing programme impacts.

Considering the objective of the programme, ‘... Enhanced capacity... to address environmental policy and management issues...’, the specific capacities which has to be enhanced must be clearly defined before impact indicators for the same can be formulated. For instance, consider a situation where NETCAB would like to contribute to raising the capacity of a given NGO ‘X’ to be able to access funding from diverse sources (donors) for the activities of ‘X’. Then the impact indicator might read as follows:

The number of sponsors/donors for activities being undertaken by ‘X’ increases from 2 (valued at USD ‘AA’) in December 1997 to 5 (valued at least USD ‘BB’) by December in the year 2000.

Clearly then if NGO ‘X’ succeeds in diversifying its sponsorship to the extent envisaged in the impact indicator, the implication would be that NETCAB has had a positive impact on NGO ‘X’.

Further, in order to be able to clearly define impact indicators, it is advisable for NETCAB to adopt a four-level hierarchy of objectives, with each level explicitly referring to the various participants in the programme as follows:

- Overall Objective / Goal (benefits derived from using the outputs).
- Purpose (Target groups’ use of Outputs),
- Outputs (Deliverables of NETCAB staff and their collaborators), and
- Activities (Action by NETCAB staff and their collaborators)

Interestingly, the NETCAB Training manual for project planning and management employs the above four levels of objectives hierarchy.

6.5: Factors and processes which explain programme impacts

Clearly, the launching of NETCAB in Southern Africa had come at a most opportune time. This is when awareness of environmental issues was, and is, on the increase. At the same time, the region’s capacity to successfully address environmental management and policy issues is considered by many stakeholders to be low. Hence, real opportunities already exist for programmes such as NETCAB to ‘make a difference’. As such NETCAB provides much sought after financial support for relevant capacity building initiatives. NETCAB also plays an important catalytic role with its financing for workshops and conferences. The fundamental assumption here is, of course, that with enhanced capacities, the institutions and peoples of Southern Africa will be in a

position to effectively tackle environmental policy and management issues, leading to benefits of increased natural resource productivity. Almost all the current beneficiaries would consider approaching NETCAB for further collaboration in the follow-on phase of the programme.

A major reason for NETCAB's silence on impacts is that these were not accommodated in the programme design, even though the 'Modification of Co-operative Agreement' of 23 January 1996, signed by IUCN ROSA on 2 April 1996, explicitly states that '..... impacts will be measured ...'. Further, the performance indicators given in the Monitoring and Evaluation Plan are, to a great extent, still to be made quite specific in terms of quantities, qualities and time. Data to be collected and the respective data collection methods are to be given before the M&E plan can be implemented.

Since programme impacts are of such great importance, it is recommended that NETCAB should, as a matter of priority, address issues of their measurements and systematic reporting on the same. Finally, it should be stressed, that on the whole, there is a recognisable trend that NETCAB has great potential for positive impacts, both at the institutional and local community levels. This potential can be realised with a focused implementation of the programme.

CHAPTER 7: SUSTAINABILITY

The approach taken by the NETCAB programme is to work through well established existing institutions; IUCN ROSA, TRAFFIC, ZERO, SASSUG, and other regional groupings that NETCAB has selected as partners in its capacity building and networking activities. The fact that NETCAB is working with these institutions means that the improvements in the capacity and networking can be sustained. For example, both IUCN ROSA and the subgrantees senior staff members have been trained in project/programme planning, management and finance. The capacity building in these field is self reinforcing as these senior staff continue to develop projects and get further practical experience in the implementation. The training in M&E has contributed to increased awareness in both IUCN and the membership who now consider M&E as an integral part of their day to day work.

The networking and capacity building that NETCAB is addressing is in the environmental fields that are crucial for the region, e.g. CITES, biodiversity, environmental economics, social aspects of natural resources management, and other transboundary issues. This in itself guarantee sustainability since networking and capacity to deal with these issues will always be required.

The electronic connection of some IUCN members and the contribution to the first subscription, although it may be too early to determine its long term sustainability, the current observations do indicate that networking through e-mail can be sustained. The approach taken by the project (i.e. installation and capacity building on the use of electronic mail) is conducive to sustainability. All members hooked up to e-mail reported the immense benefits they have derived from e-mail and are committed to continue paying the subscriptions after the NETCAB initial support. Some members have also observed that the use of e-mail is cost effective and have contributed to reduction in their institutional operating cost by reducing travel costs as the need to networking through physical presence is reduced.

NETCAB's involvement in regional capacity building in State Of Environment Reporting also has very high chances of long term sustainability. The regional issues that the programme is addressing are of regional importance and in the case of SOE and capacity building in wildlife trade control, many governments are already working on SOE reporting as a requirement to meet their obligations under international treaties and conventions. Technical capacity and networking is an urgently needed aspect in the region, the sustainability of which may be very high. During the mid-term review, the team observed that most of the institutions supplied with computer hard and soft ware through the NETCAB programme, had already existing plans of computerising their work and the contribution through the NETCAB programme expedited the process as well as improved the capacity to manage data bases and use the computer in general. In fact, before the hard and soft ware were provided, NETCAB signed MoUs that

stated that the sub-grantees will undertake to continue the maintenance of the equipment.

In some projects, the approach adopted in capacity building are self sustaining, for example, the approach used by SOBONET in its applied and practical herbaria capacity building, and the training on how to write articles and the provision of the medium to publish the articles is a positive move towards ensuring sustainability. Some of the sub-grantees are already trying to address the issue of sustainability, e.g. the SABONET Steering Committee has since been asked to come up with career development plan for the herbaria personnel trained under SABONET.

Despite the above positive aspects with regards to the sustainability of the effects derived from NETCAB, there are a number of problems working against sustainability. These have been captured in some of the programme progress reports as:

- high staff turnover in some collaborating institutions, and in some cases, the knowledge of new concepts acquired through the programme's capacity building may not be applied due to too many other duties.
- Lack of financial resources
- Political instability, absence of relevant supporting policies and lack of political sensitivity, and
- Institutional jealousies, particularly with regards to perceived monopolies in the mandate over certain environmental issues.

On the whole, the review team formed the opinion that the capacity building and networking improvements achieved through NETCAB have very high chances of being sustained in the long run. The major reasons for this can be found in both the enthusiasm of partners and sub-grantees for the activities undertaken and the markedly improved awareness of some of the issues which have to be tackled. Without doubt ALL the parties concerned are not only giving some serious thoughts to financing the activities concerned, but some are already making initial efforts at tapping into alternate sources of funds.

CHAPTER 8: LESSONS LEARNED AND DISCUSSION OF PRIORITIES

8.1: General

This chapter collects the various lessons drawn from the implementation of NETCAB so far. It is structured in the following manner: firstly important lessons learnt with regards to the overall design are presented followed by issues pertaining to the various activities (Pre-funded and new). Thereafter, both operational and development lessons learned are highlighted. Finally proposed priority areas for the follow-on phase are discussed.

8.2: Lessons Learned from Overall Design

The overall design of the programme, though functional, could have been improved to thus facilitating smoother implementation. For instance, the objective was 'condensed' and as such it is not surprising that attempts were not made to specify performance indicators for the various parts of the objective. Further, important assumptions were not systematically recorded. Finally, the necessary M&E plan was not compiled and ready for implementation in the first few months of commencement of the programme.

Despite the above, the implementation of the programme progressed reasonably well, but accompanied with various levels of uncertainty concerning impacts.

The **lesson** here is that serious thoughts should be given to producing comprehensive designs for projects and programmes, as this contribute in no small way to smoother implementation later.

8.3: Lessons Learned with respect to Programme Activities

It is the view of the review team that the implementation of NETCAB activities, with the exception of the short term fellowships and professional exchange, have progressed smoothly. This can be attributed to the fact that these activities have well defined capacity building and networking requirements. For instance, SABONET is well focused on training for herbarium management, while IUCN ROSA has the necessary experience in providing technical support services to its members.

The above notwithstanding, ALL interviewees were agreed that implementation would have been smoother if a structured induction or 'refresher course' on administrative procedures involving USAID/RCSA had been held at the very beginning of the activities, and not after several months. This is a very important **lesson**.

The fellowship and exchange didn't quite get off the ground. It was characterised by a low level of interest (only three proposals submitted) from IUCN members and other potential beneficiaries. Thereafter, only one out of the three applicants got an award. The low level of interest is apparently due to inadequate publicity for the fellowship component. An important **lesson** here is that simply distributing printed material about a facility does not necessarily constitute effective dissemination or publicity of the relevant information. There should always be appropriate follow-ups.

The foregoing also applies to communication among NETCAB partners. For example, one interviewee complained about not knowing how to go about completing the documentation for a proposal to NETCAB. The interviewee however acknowledged receiving documented guidelines from NETCAB, but did not read them.

In contrast to the low interest shown in the fellowship, there has been increased interest in the small grants for seminars, workshops and conferences. A fundamental difficulty encountered by NETCAB with this set of activities was that several of the proposed workshops and conferences appeared to be an end in themselves with no clear details as to what they will lead to. This state of affairs has no doubt contributed to the current impression of 'workshop fatigue' existing in the region. A clear **lesson** here is that organisers considering holding workshops/seminars should give serious thoughts to, and put in place follow up activities to ensure that meaningful contributions are made towards achieving overall objectives.

8.4: Operational lessons learned

An important operational lesson learned is the necessity for simplifying operational procedures if these are to be effectively utilised. A good example here is the production of a simplified accounting manual which greatly contributed to increased understanding and productivity of NETCAB partners with respect to the financial management for the various activities.. The **lesson** here is that complicated procedures must always be simplified so as to enhance the chances of successful project implementation.

The practice of pre-award audits has turned out to be a very good intervention in ensuring operational success with the administering of sub-grants for implementing activities. The **lesson** here is that this practice should be continued.

Pre-award audits have been confined to investigating financial systems and practices in targeted organisation. Positive **lessons**, similar to those learnt with pre-award financial audits might very well be forthcoming if NETCAB were to

conduct 'pre-award programmatic audits' to ascertain whether potential partner organisations and institutions have the capacity to successfully implement given activities. Evidently, in the absence of the necessary capacity, capacity building needs would be implied thus defining the parameters for a relationship with NETCAB.

8.5: Development lessons learned

The design and implementation of NETCAB has definitely added to the body of knowledge in the area of environmental programming practices. It is the view of the review team, however, that similar programmes/projects should not underplay the initial efforts and thoughts necessary for programme/project design. For one thing, serious thoughts should always be given to the 'Overall Goal' to be aimed for, and how project/programme impacts will be measured and reported on.

8.6: Discussion of Priorities

Clearly, because of the importance of impacts the M&E system must be completed as a matter of urgency (during the current phase). Thereafter systematic data and information collection for assessing the impact of NETCAB must be commenced on a priority basis. Evidently, as a comprehensive M&E system would have to be based on an updated programme design, it would be imperative that the design of NETCAB be updated, preferably to include a four-level hierarchy of objectives as discussed in section 6.4 of this report.

Clearly also, the holding of an end of phase workshop / conference in which the updating of the design would be discussed should be treated as a priority.

As a further priority, increased efforts must be put into publicising the fellowship component of the programme. Possible expanded target groups would be university students in the various agriculture and natural resource management discipline who could be given the opportunity to undertake project work in countries in the Southern Africa region.

As a new area of activity, NETCAB must undertake and /or support a series of comprehensive natural resource management capacity building needs assessments. The outcome of these can then be used to define increased focus for NETCAB supported capacity building interventions (including training).

Also, NETCAB should increase support for activities in the areas of Environmental Information Systems (EIS) and State of the Environment Reporting (SOE). A major reason for this is that in the absence of comprehensive assessments, it would not be possible to establish whether

biodiversity is being maintained and whether progress is being made towards the goal of sustainable utilisation of natural resources.

Support should also be increased for activities in the areas of social and economic aspects of natural resource management, since without enhanced understanding and appreciation of these, the impact of NETCAB cannot be placed into proper perspective.

Support should be continued in upgrading IUCN ROSA staff, members, partners and commissions in technical skills relevant for achieving the objectives set out in the strategic plans of both IUCN ROSA and USAID/RCSA.

Finally, IUCN ROSA needs to undertake an internal review to see where there are opportunities for greater synergy among their programmes and projects (e.g. NRMP and NETCAB) and hopefully eliminate any redundant activities.

CHAPTER 9

CONCLUSIONS, RECOMMENDATIONS AND PRIORITIES

9.1: Conclusions

The following conclusions have been drawn from the review:

NETCAB in General

1: NETCAB is a worthwhile initiative which is fully appreciated by ALL stakeholders who have been involved with the programme. Its inception came at a most opportune time when the need for increasing the region's ability and capacity to successfully tackle regional/transboundary environmental issues is becoming appreciated.

2: In the original design of the programme some important programme design details were not comprehensively completed (e.g. clarity on the different levels of objectives, making provision for programme impact analysis).

Fit in IUCN ROSA and USAID /RCSA Strategic Frameworks

3: NETCAB endeavours to appropriately tackle shortfalls in the capacity of government and non-governmental institutions in Southern Africa to successfully address environmental policy and natural resource management issues. As such it is fully consistent with both IUCN ROSA and USAID/RCSA strategic plans.

Commitment of Stakeholders

4: The observation made in paragraph 2 above, notwithstanding, the implementation of phase 1 of the programme has been characterised by a very high degree of commitment to, and engagement in the various programme activities, by the Programme Steering Committee, the Co-ordination Unit and the partners involved with programme implementation.

NETCAB Implementation Arrangements

5: The implementation procedures with the PSC and the PCU are sound, but to some extent too intensive at the level of the PSC. The PSC, for instance, is apparently making 'too many suggestions for modifying and/or changing proposals'. This can only happen because the PSC examines individual proposals in detail.

6: The PCU is overworked (= under staffed). The Programme Assistant spends an appreciable amount of time attending to administrative and secretarial matters with the bulk of the programmatic work been done by the Programme Manager.

7: The financial accounting practices put in place are also considered sound, although the issue of accounting for indirect costs took some time to be resolved. The question of grantee contributions has still to be resolved.

8: Further, NETCAB affiliates and partners consider the financial accounting requirements rigorous, but acceptable, as it facilitates the avoidance of financial mismanagement.

9: The practice of pre-award audits has turned out to be a very good intervention in ensuring operational success with the administering of sub-grants for implementing activities.

10: 'Communication' between various players in NETCAB (particularly between and among subgrantees and implementers of pre-funded activities) is apparently not as good as it could be, or as desired. Simply distributing printed material is apparently not enough for effective communication / information dissemination.

11: Programmatically, most activities undertaken under NETCAB have progressed satisfactorily (e.g. pre-funded activities small grants to facilitate the acquisition and documentation of pertinent knowledge on environmental policy and management issue, short training workshops with hands-on components, etc.). The progress reports show high levels of completion of planned activities.

12: On the other hand, the Fellowship Component of the programme attracted very few applications (3) with only one approval given. Evidently, this component would benefit from increased publicity and better focus.

Programme Efficiency

13: The implementation of the programme activities by NETCAB Co-ordination Unit and implementers of both pre-funded and new activities is accomplished with a very high level of efficiency (converting inputs to outputs). This is clearly the strongest accomplishment of the programme. Programme personnel are fully engaged and committed to their work.

14: The number of publications released by NETCAB (Guidelines, Training Reports, The M&E plan, Donor Profile, etc.) is quite impressive.

Programme Effectiveness

15: Concerning the effectiveness (relationship between outputs delivered and target groups' use of the same), Co-operating partners are clearly finding the outputs of NETCAB useful.

Programme Impact

16: Taking 'impact' to depict the relationship between target groups' use of programme outputs (purpose) and the 'benefits' enjoyed, NETCAB's original design did not make provision for the systematic collection of data and information for assessing programme impact(for e.g. as found in an M&E plan). Major progress has however been made with the compilation of a Monitoring and Evaluation plan. This plan still has to be completed to include comprehensive descriptions of 'impact indicators'.

9.2: Recommendations

Considering the findings and discussions presented in this report, the following recommendations are made. It has not been necessary to pair up some of the conclusions with recommendations, hence the difference between the number of conclusions and recommendations.

NETCAB in General

1: While there are a number of refinements which should be made within the Programme's structure and methods of implementation, there is no doubt that the Programme should be continued into phase 2. It is delivering and receiving the services and support desired by both IUCN ROSA and USAID/RCSA.

2: The design of the programme must be re-visited in order to clarify the different levels of objectives and make provision for important assumptions. A four-level objectives hierarchy is recommended.

NETCAB Implementation Arrangements

3: With regards to the PSC involvement in the review of project proposals, It is recommended that work with proposals should best be finalised at the PCU level with respect to format and conformity with the NETCAB programmatic criteria, before being tabled at the PSC.

4: Although this issue may not be addressable until there are phase 2 funding provisions, the PCU needs to free up as soon as possible the valuable skills and services of the PCU's Programme Assistant to more substantively assist the Programme Manager. The recommendation is to assign a full time secretary/administrative assistant for the PCU. This position could be filled either by a current IUCN staff member (which could be considered part of the IUCN's contribution, if desired) or by the recruitment of an additional staff member (wherein funds availability would become an issue). Given the increased workload of the PCU and the substantive demands being placed on it by the

PSC, RCSA, IUCN members and partners, etc., the appointment of this person is believed to be critical.

Considering the interest being generated by NETCAB, the Programme Assistant's time can best be spent on programmatic issues like backstopping partners in the speedy completion of project proposals and the thorough pre-screening of the same before submitting 'summaries' to the PSC.

5: The rigorous financial procedures in place must be maintained. However newcomers to the programme must be given thorough induction before they start implementing activities

6: The pre-award audits must be continued. In fact, it is recommended that 'A pre-award implementation capacity audit' be initiated for all new subgrantees.

7: Beginning in the very near term (and subject to resolution of the overburdened PCU), a brief but regular newsletter should be produced by the PCU. The topics and target audience are quite obvious. There is no doubt that all parties, especially those who have not been as engaged in the Programme as originally envisaged or desired, will benefit greatly from this relatively modest investment of time and resources.

8: While there is clear evidence of the success of the new grant component, that cannot be said for the fellowship side of the programme. The PCU and PSC needs to take stock of what has happened to date and determine what proactive measures need to be taken in order to address this deficiency. A possible way forward is to step up the publicity of the fellowship component among students in the disciplines of natural resource management and related fields.

Programme Impact

9: The immediate attention to the monitoring, evaluation and reporting of impacts is clearly warranted. The continuation of NETCABS M&E plan development and implementation needs to be closely followed by the PSC/PCU and RCSA. As mentioned earlier, there are some excellent opportunities for collaboration and close co-ordination with RCSA's special Objective B focus and contract team. Lastly, future Memoranda of Understanding should contain specific language regarding this M&E requirement.

9.3: Recommended Priorities

Clearly, because of the importance of impacts the M&E system must be completed as a matter of urgency (during the current phase). Thereafter systematic data and information collection for assessing the impact of NETCAB must be commenced on a priority basis. Evidently, as a comprehensive M&E system would have to be based on an updated design, it would be imperative that the design of NETCAB be updated, preferably to include a four-level hierarchy of objectives as discussed in section 6.4 of this report.

As a priority issue, an end-of-phase 1 workshop involving all NETCAB participants (PSC, PCU, Sub-grantees, etc.) should be held to discuss and clarify overall Programme questions, such as:

- Lessons learned to date
- Programme overall design, including agreement on the overall programme objective and the components (the four major outputs ?) necessary and sufficient for achieving the objectives and the question of programme impact (This must, of necessity be considered at the strategic level, since the details can be worked out later in the office).
- The revised/updated terms of reference of the PSC and organisational representation, and
- Agreement on programme priorities being proposed here.

As a further priority, increased efforts must be put into publicising the fellowship component. Possible expanded target groups would be university students in the various agriculture and natural resource management disciplines. These could be given the opportunity to undertake project work in countries in the Southern Africa region.

As a new area of activity, NETCAB must undertake and /or support a series of comprehensive natural resource management capacity building needs assessments. The outcome of these can then be used to define increased focus for NETCAB supported capacity building interventions (including training).

In relation to the audits, more attention should be paid to the expected grantee contribution, and the possibility for quantification of the sub-grantee's contribution too.

Also, NETCAB should increase support for activities in the areas of Environmental Information Systems (EIS) and State of the Environment Reporting (SOE). A major reason for this is that in the absence of comprehensive assessments, it would not be possible to establish whether biodiversity is being maintained and whether progress is being made towards the goal of sustainable utilisation of natural resources.

Support should also be increased for activities in the areas of social and economic aspects of natural resource management, since without enhanced

understanding and appreciation of these, the impact of NETCAB cannot be placed into proper perspective.

Support should be continued in upgrading IUCN ROSA staff, members, partners and commissions in technical skills relevant for achieving the objectives set out in the strategic plans of both IUCN ROSA and USAID/RCSA.

Finally, IUCN ROSA needs to undertake an internal review to see where there are opportunities for greater synergy among their programmes and projects (e.g. NRMP and NETCAB) and hopefully eliminate any redundant activities.

ANNEXES

- Annex-A: Terms of Reference
- Annex-B: Itinerary for the Review Team
- Annex-C: List of persons contacted / interviewed
- Annex-D: Questionnaire sent to persons interviewed by telephone
- Annex-E: List of documents consulted

ANNEX-A

MID TERM- EVALUATION:

REGIONAL NETWORKING AND CAPACITY BUILDING INITIATIVE FOR SOUTHERN AFRICA (NETCAB) (PROJECT NO. 690-0283-A-00-5950-00)

TERMS OF REFERENCE

PROJECT BACKGROUND

The overall objective of the programme is" to *enhance the capacity of Southern Africa's government institutions and NGOs to address environmental policy and management issues relevant to increasing natural resource productivity through co-ordinated regional initiatives and networks*".

In order to accomplish the above objective, the programme aims to achieve four major outputs as indicated in the Annex which also lists the activities which have been carried out under the outputs. The activities are categorised into Pre-funded and New Activities. Pre-funded activities are those which were fully defined for implementation at the beginning of the programme, and are specified in the Programme Document.

New Activities are those which clearly link with the NETCAB Programme objective but have been identified and approved in the course of implementing the programme.

The NETCAB programme was planned for five years and subdivided into two phases, first phase, 3 years and second phase, 2years.

2. PURPOSE OF THE EVALUATION

According to the Co-operative Agreement with USAID a joint programme review by IUCN ROSA and USAID/RCSA has to be conducted in the third year of operation. The purpose of the review is to:

- i) Determine whether programme performance and progress has been satisfactory; identify opportunities and constraints, and suggest appropriate improvements to the administrative procedures, institutional roles and responsibilities and technical focus.
- ii) Identify priorities for the remaining portion of the five year programme and provide recommendations on budget allocations against these priorities.

The findings of the Review Team will guide the NETCAB Steering Committee, IUCN ROSA and USAID in determining whether the programme should continue into the second phase, and if so, the priority issues to be addressed.

3. SCOPE AND FOCUS

- i) The review needs to assess the performance of the NETCAB programme throughout Southern Africa, within the context of IUCN's and USAID/RCSA's Strategic Plan for Southern Africa.
- ii) The review will focus on :
 - a) progress to date towards the objectives/outputs of the programme.
 - b) the adequacy of implementation arrangements in achieving these objectives/outputs, and
 - c) recommendations for areas of focus to best achieve the programme objectives during the follow-on phase

The review will be a positive intervention to establish the foundation and direction of the subsequent phase of the programme, and to make any needed adjustments during the current phase of the programme.
- iii) The methodology will comprise review of programme documentation and interviews with the relevant stakeholders.

a) Review of Programme Documentation

The first task of the Review Team will be to review the various programme documents. These include:

- The Programme Co-operative Agreement.
- IUCN/ROSA's and USAID/RCSA's Strategic Plans for Southern Africa.
- Budgets
- Semi-annual workplans
- Semi-annual progress reports
- Approved Project proposals
- Contracts with Subgrantees and other institutions
- Guidelines (Project Proposal Format, Selection Criteria, Fellowship, Training, Monitoring and Evaluation).
- Monitoring and Evaluation Plan.

b) Interviewing the stakeholders

The Review Team will interview the following people.

- IUCN members/partners who benefited from the programme.
- IUCN members/partners who did not benefit from the programme.
- Co-ordinators of Pre-funded activities.
- Programme Steering Committee members.
- Participants in the regional programme (Subgrant activities).

- Key IUCN staff members (IUCN ROSA Director, IUCN Country office Representatives, NETCAB Programme Co-ordination Unit).
- iv) The final review report will contain a mixture of quantitative and qualitative information. Recommendations for improving the capture of quantitative data should be included.

4. ISSUES TO BE COVERED

- i) **Effectiveness:** An assessment of the progress made under(i) the pre-funded Activities, (ii) Activities approved under the Small Grants and Workshop/Conference Funds and the likelihood that each Activity will fulfil its objective. This assessment should identify opportunities and constraints to progress. The assessment should also analyse the likelihood of the various Activities/Projects under each Programme Output contributing to achieving each Output, and make recommendations for the future focus to achieve these strategic results.
- ii) **Efficiency:** An assessment of the results achieved , against the level of resources and means used to achieve them. The assessment will probe more into the implementation arrangements and the following tasks will be carried out by the Review Team.
- a) Assess the adequacy of implementation arrangements, including the structure and operations of the Programme Co-ordination Unit and the Programme Steering Committee.
 - b) Assess the process for reviewing and awarding new grants and fellowships.
 - c) Assess sub-grantee performance in implementing, monitoring and reporting in programme activities.
 - d) Assess the appropriateness of the indicators in the existing M & E plans.
 - e) Assess the financial procedures, including timely reporting/budgeting, disbursements and account management.
 - f) Identify any problems or inefficiencies in implementation and make recommendations on how they can be corrected.
 - g) Propose NETCAB programmatic priorities for the next phase .
 - h) Provide recommendations on future allocation of the programme budget for the proposed programme priorities.
- iii) **Impact :** Assess the degree to which the programme has made impact on capacity in Environmental Policy, Natural Resources Management and Project Management. Make recommendations to improve the impact in the region.
- iv) **Relevance:** Assess the relevance of the Pre-funded and New activities against IUCN ROSA and USAID/RCSA Strategic Plans.
- v) **Sustainability.** Assess the extent to which the positive changes achieved as a result of the project might be expected to last after NETCAB programme has been terminated.

5. EVALUATION TEAM

The Review Team will comprise three members, one from IUCN, the other USAID and the third being an independent consultant. IUCN ROSA and USAID/RCSA will each independently identify their representative for the team. These candidates will be mutually approved by IUCN and USAID, or the NETCAB Steering Committee. Based on the skills mix of these two team members, the third independent member (who should be a Southern African National) will be nominated by IUCN and approved by the NETCAB Steering Committee.

6. TIME TABLE

The review will be carried out in January/February 1998 for a maximum period of four weeks. It is likely to start on 9th February 1998.

3 WEEKS: review of documents, regional travel, interviews and meetings with the following stakeholders:

- IUCN ROSA -Regional and Country Offices
- USAID/RCSA
- Steering Committee members
- TRAFFIC/WRI
- Subgrantees
- IUCN Members/Partners
- Some participants on workshops/Conferences organised under the programme.

1 WEEK: Report preparation and finalisation.

7. REPORTING

The Review Team will produce the report following a framework recommended by IUCN ROSA and USAID/RCSA (Annex 1). A draft report will be submitted to the NETCAB Programme Co-ordination Unit (PCU) by 26 February 1998.

The NETCAB PCU will distribute copies to the NETCAB Steering Committee members, USAID, IUCN, WRI, TRAFFIC and Sub-grantees for comments. A period of two weeks will be provided for review and comment back to the NETCAB PCU, which will then synthesise the comments in a memo back to the Review Team. The memo will be a major input on the debriefing discussion to be held at IUCN ROSA on 24th March 1998.

A final report will be expected one week after the debriefing meeting, and this will not be later than 1st April 1998.

The Review Team will produce a comprehensive final report following the recommended framework. Twenty hard copies of the report will be submitted to the NETCAB Programme Co-ordination Unit, together with the electronic version in Word Perfect 5.2 or 6.1.

The final report will be submitted to the NETCAB Steering Committee for approval, after which it will be distributed to USAID, the Subgrantees and IUCN members/partners.

ANNEX

MAJOR OUTPUTS	PRE-FUNDED ACTIVITIES	NEW ACTIVITIES/WORKSHOPS	LEAD INSTITUTIONS
<i>1. Increased institutional management, technical and networking capacity in specific fields, including community based natural resource management, and terrestrial and aquatic biodiversity conservation.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The IUCN ROSA Technical support services. Regional Capacity Building Network for Southern Africa Botanical Diversity. {National Botanical Institute National Training Programmes for Natural Resource Managers in Southern Africa. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A Regional Workshop to Network on and Identify Capacity Building Requirements for the Conservation and Management of Wetlands in Southern Africa 	<p>IUCN ROSA</p> <p>National Botanical Institute, South Africa</p> <p>IUCN ROSA</p> <p>ZERO a Regional Environment Organisation</p>
<i>2. Strengthened national and regional capacity for environmental policy and strategy development and implementation.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Environmental Economics Capacity Building Programme in Southern Africa. Regional Wildlife Trade Control 		<p>IUCN ROSA</p> <p>TRAFFIC, Malawi</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Legal Study on Trade Restriction Compensation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exotic Species Workshop • Training of Traditional and Spiritual Leaders in SADC region • Enhancing the Capacity of some NGOs in SADC to implement agenda 21 	<p>IUCN Environmental Law Centre, Germany</p> <p>Aqua-culture for Local Community development programme (ALCOM)</p> <p>Association of Zimbabwe Traditional Environmental Conservation (AZTREC)</p> <p>ZERO</p>
<p>3. Increased dialogue, linkages and collaboration between stakeholder groups within countries and throughout the region;</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regional Environmental Strategies Network. • Southern Africa Sustainable Use Specialist Group • Short term fellowships and professional exchange with relevant regional and international institutions. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exotic Species Workshop 	<p>IUCN ROSA</p> <p>Regional Network linked to IUCN ROSA</p> <p>IUCN ROSA</p> <p>ALCOM</p>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Training of Traditional and Spiritual Leaders in SADC region. • Co-ordination and Capacity Building Amongst Regional NGOs and Community Representatives with respect to Conventions Critical to CBCD in Southern Africa • Southern Africa Regional Workshop on Wildlife and Fences. • A Regional Workshop to Network on and Identify Capacity Building Requirements for the Conservation and Management of Wetlands in Southern Africa • Publication of a Regional Community-Based Organisations Directory. • Consultative Workshop on Ecosystem Management in Southern Africa • Workshop on strategy Development for a Regional Environmental and Biodiversity Information System Network. • Workshop for Southern Africa Biodiversity Forum. 	<p>AZTREC</p> <p>Africa Resources Trust , Zimbabwe</p> <p>Conservation International, Botswana</p> <p>ZERO A Regional Organisation, Zimbabwe</p> <p>Development Media Organisation Zimbabwe</p> <p>University of Botswana , Zimbabwe</p> <p>SADC Environmental Technical Unit (SETU), Zimbabwe</p> <p>SADC Biodiversity Focal Point, Malawi</p>
4. Improved environmental	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Environmental Information, 		IUCN ROSA

<i>information, communication and education products and processes which enhance the outreach of a broad range of target groups and raise public awareness.</i>	communication and education	<p>Workshop on strategy Development for a Regional Environmental and Biodiversity Information System Network</p> <p>Environmental Documentation and Resource Centre Network</p>	<p>SADC Environmental Technical Unit (SETU), Zimbabwe</p> <p>EDRCN Steering Committee, Zimbabwe</p>
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REPORT FRAMEWORK

The report should, at the minimum, comprehensively cover the following areas:

1: Executive Summary

This should include conclusions and recommendations

2: Introduction

2.1: Background for the review

2.2: Brief description of the project

2.3: Review methodology including the general approach used

2.4: Structure of the report

3: Project Relevance

3.1: Rationale and context of the project at its inception

3.2: Changes in project context during implementation

3.3: Relevance of the project in relation to IUCN ROSA and USAID/RCSA Strategic Plans for the region

4: Efficiency

4.1: Project progress compared to work plans

4.2: Results in relation to resource utilisation

5: Effectiveness

5.1: Expected achievements of objectives when the project was designed

5.2: Actual or expected achievement of objectives at the time of review

5.3: Effectiveness of the existing implementation procedures

5.4: Factors and processes affecting achievement of objectives

6: Impact of the project

6.1: Expected and unexpected impacts on target groups

6.2: Expected and unexpected impacts at the institutional level

6.3: Factors and processes which explain project impacts

7: Sustainability

7.1: The extent to which any improvements in regional, national and institutional capacity and networking can be sustained

8: Lessons Learned

8.1: Development and operational lessons learned

9: Conclusions and recommendations

9.1: Conclusions

9.2: Recommendations

- General

- Focus during the next two year phase of the project

Annexes

- 1: Terms of Reference
- 2: Itinerary for the review team
- 3: List of persons consulted
- 4: List of documents referred to

ANNEX-B
ITINERARY FOR THE NETCAB EVALUATION TEAM

DATE	NAME	POSITION	ORGANISATION/ PROGRAMME/ ACTIVITY	ACTIVITY
09-02-98 Morning (9-10am)	Dr. Yemi Katerere Reford Mwakalagho Bertha Nherera Solom Dzimba Jacquie Chenje Carmel Mbizvo	Regional Director Programme Manager Programme Assistant Finance Officer Programme Co-ordinator Programme Co-ordinator	IUCN ROSA NETCAB NETCAB NETCAB EICP RIDP	Introductions
9-0—2-98 (10am -1pm)	Evaluation Team			Review Documents
09-02-98 (Afternoon)	Evaluation Team			Evaluation Team meet to discuss approach
10-02-098	Evaluation Team			Review Documents
11-02-98 Morning	Yemi Katerere	Regional Director, & NETCAB Steering Committee Chairperson	IUCN ROSA	Interview
Morning	Reford Mwakalagho	Programme Manager	NETCAB	Interview
Morning	Jacquie Chenje	Programme Coordinator	EICP	Interview
Morning	Carmel Mbizvo	Programme Coordinator	RIDP	Interview
Afternoon	Mike Murphree	Executive Officer	SASUSG	Interview
Afternoon	Yves Sikwila	Finance and Administration Manager	IUCN ROSA	Interview

Afternoon	Solom Dzimba	Finance Officer	NETCAB	Interview
12-02-98	Munyaradzi Chenje	Director	IMERCSA	Interview
	Reggie Mugwara	Director	SADC Food Security ZERO	Interview
	Joseph Matowanyika	Director	ART	Interview
	John Hutton	Director	National Herbarium	Interview
	Nozipo Nobanda	Head		Interview
	.....	Participant on course/workshop	.....	Interview
	.....	Participant on course/workshop	.....	Interview
13-02-98 Morning	Ebenazario Chonguica	Country representative	IUCN Mozambique,	Interview (by Phone)
Afternoon	Christine Elias	Programme Steering Committee member	WRI	Interview (by Phone)
Morning	Jobo Molapo	Programme Steering Committee member	SADC ELMS	Interview (by Phone)
Morning	Dr. P. Fakudze,	Programme Steering Committee member	University of Swaziland	Interview (by Phone)
Afternoon	N. Christoffersen,	Former IUCN ROSA Regional Programme Co-ordinator	Africa Resources Trust, Washington D.C.	Interview (by Phone)
Afternoon	C. Gonese	Director	AZTREC	Interview (by Phone)
Morning	Prof. A. Siwela	Programme Steering Committee member	Wild life Society of Zambia	Interview (by Phone)
14-02-98				TRAVEL to Botswana
14-02-98/ 15-02-98	Donna Stauffer	Director, ADNR office & NETCAB Steering Committee Member	USAID/RCSA	Interview
16-02-98	Ruud Jansen	IUCN Representative	IUCN, Botswana	Interview

Morning	K. Patricia Walker	Director	Forestry Association of Botswana	Interview
	.....	Participant on course/workshop	.....	Interview
	.....	Participant on course/workshop	.....	Interview
16-02-98 Afternoon				TRAVEL TO SOUTH AFRICA
17-02-98	Brian Huntley	Chairman	SABONET	Interview
	Chris Willis	Co-ordinator	SABONET	Interview
	Gideon Smith	Head	National Botanical Institute	Interview
	Saliem Fakir	IUCN Representative	IUCN , RSA	Interview
	.....	Participant on course/workshop	.....	Interview
	.....	Participant on course/workshop	.....	Interview
	.....	Participant on course/workshop	.....	Interview
	Ashish Bodasing	TRAFFIC Trainer	TRAFFIC	Interview
18-02-98				TRAVEL to Malawi
19-02-98	Carl Bruessow	Steering Committee member	UNDP, Malawi	Interview
	Tom Milliken	Director	TRAFFIC	Interview
	David Mulolani	Programme Officer	TRAFFIC	Interview
	John Mphande	Director	Parks & Wildlife	Interview
	James Seyani	Director	National Herbarium	Interview (by phone)
	Sam Mapila	Deputy Director	Fisheries Department	Interview
	Kenneth Nyasulu	SADC, Biodiversity	Ministry of Forestry, Fisheries and	Interview

		Focal Point	Environmental Affairs	
20-02-98				TRAVEL to Harare

Abbreviation list

IUCN ROSA	The World Conservation Union, Regional Office for Southern Africa
NETCAB	Networking and Capacity Building
ECIP	Environmental Information and Communication Programme
RIDP	Regional Institutional Development Programme
SASUSG	Southern Africa Sustainable Use Specialist Group
IMERCSA	India Musokotwane Environmental Research Centre for Southern Africa
SADC	Southern Africa Development Community
ZERO	A Regional Environment Organisation
SABONET	Southern Africa Botanical Network
TRAFFIC	International Organisation for monitoring Trade in Wildlife
USAID/RCSA	United States Agency for International Development/Regional Centre for Southern Africa
ADNR	Agriculture, Democracy and Natural Resources
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme

ANNEX C: List of Persons Contacted/Interviewed

D. Dzimba	IUCN ROSA, PCU Financial officer
M. Murphree	SASUSG Executive officer
Y. Katerere	IUCN ROSA Regional Director
R. Mwakalagho	IUCN ROSA, NETCAB Programme Manager
J. Chenje	IUCN ROSA, IEC Programme Coordinator
C. Mbizvo	IUCN ROSA, RID Programme Coordinator
E. Gweya	IUCN ROSA, RID Project Officer
Y. Sikwila	IUCN ROSA, Finance and Administration Manager
J. Matowanyika	ZERO Director
A. Mashita	COMUTEC Director (Course participant)
R. Mugwara	SADC/Food Security, Director
A. Mapawa	Zimbabwe National Herbarium (Course Participant)
N. Nobanda	Zimbabwe National Herbarium Director
J. Hutton	ART Director
S. Metcaff	ART, NETCAB Project Coordinator
M. Chenje	EMRCSA Director
C. Gonese	AZTREC Director
E. Chonuica	IUCN Mozambique Country Representative (by phone and fax)
A. Siwela	PSC member, Zambia Wildlife Society (by phone and e-mail)
B. Nherera	IUCN ROSA, NETCAB Programme Assistant
J. Molapo	PSC member, SADC-ELMS (by phone and fax)
N. Christoffersen	ART, Washington (by phone and e-mail)
C. Elias	WRI, Washington (by phone and fax)
D. Stauffer	USAID/RCSA and PSC member
A. Merkel	USAID/RCSA SO-3 Team Leader
R. Jansen	IUCN, Botswana Country Representative
D. Noble	USAID/RCSA Controller
B. Badisang	Botswana National Institute of Research, Development and Documentation
S. Monna	Government of Botswana, National Conservation Strategy Agency
J. Magole	Forestry Association of Botswana, Director
S. Fakir	IUCN RSA Country Representative
C. Willis	SABONET Project Coordinator
S. Nkoane	RSA National Herbarium Scientific Officer
S. Smith	RSA National Herbarium, Director of Research
A. Bodasing	TRAFFIC RSA, Trainer
K. Nyasulu	SADC Forestry Sector Technical Coordinator
J. Mphande	Malawi National Parks and Wildlife, Director
S. Mapila	Malawi Fisheries Department, Deputy Director
T. Milliken	TRAFFIC Malawi, Regional Director
D. Mulolani	TRAFFIC Malawi, Programme Officer

ANNEX-D Questionnaire sent to persons
interviewed by telephone
NETCAB Mid-Term Review
February 1998

Please take a few minutes to respond to the following:
Email your response to alwright@africaonline.co.zw
Thank you very much for your support.

1: Describe NETCAB (in your own words)

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2: List up to five aspects you consider to be 'strengths' of NETCAB

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3: List up to five aspects you consider to be 'weaknesses' of NETCAB

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4: Are there certain aspects you would like to see included in the
activities undertaken under NETCAB (Opportunities)

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5: What do you consider to be 'Threats' to the activities of NETCAB ?

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ANNEX-E : List of Documents Consulted

LIST OF PUBLICATIONS UNDER NETCAB

ACTIVITY 1.1: IUCN ROSA TECHNICAL SUPPORT SERVICES AND PROJECT CO-ORDINATION UNIT

1. Profiles of Donors Supporting Environment and Development initiatives in Southern Africa.
2. NETCAB Programme Brochure

ACTIVITY 1.2 : SOUTHERN AFRICA BOTANICAL NETWORK (SABONET)

1. SABONET Newsletter, volume 1, No. 1 August 1996.
2. SABONET Newsletter, volume 1, No. 2 December 1996.
3. SABONET Newsletter, volume 2, No. 1 April 1997.
4. SABONET Newsletter, volume 2, No. 2 August 1997.
5. SABONET Newsletter, volume 2, No. 3 December 1997.
6. Course Notes: Herbarium Management and Plant Conservation Training Course 4 November 1996 to 6 December 1996.
7. Course Notes: Herbarium Management Training Course volume I, 4 to 22 August 1997
8. Course Notes: Herbarium Management Training Course volume II, 4 to 22 August 1997
9. Course Notes : Herbarium Management Training Course Volume III, 4 to 22 August 1997.
10. Course : Pteridophyte Identification and Botanical Nomenclature Training Course, 10-18 November 1997.
11. Course: Grass Identification Training Course, 8-12 December 1997.
12. Status Report: Southern Africa National Herbaria, March 1997.
13. Index Herbarium : Southern African Supplement, September 1997.

ACTIVITY 2.2: TRADE RECORDS ANALYSIS IN FAUNA AND FLORA IN COMMERCE (TRAFFIC) EAST AND SOUTHERN AFRICA

1. CITES Implementation Workshop Materials.
2. CITES Training Workshop :Consultant's Summary report to TRAFFIC on the Workshop held in Harare at Lake Chivero, Zimbabwe, 18 to 19 November 1996.
3. CITES Training workshop, Harare, Department of Parks and Wildlife Headquarters, Zimbabwe, 17-21 March 1997
4. A report to the IUCN/CITES Meeting Promoting Dialogue Between African Countries on the Conservation of the African Elephant.
5. Proceedings of a Workshop on the enforcement of the wildlife Act of Zambia, 10-11 May 1997.

6. Evaluation Report of the TRAFFIC Intelligence information system at the Anti-Corruption Commission.
7. Tanzania Workshop Report, May 1997.
8. Trade Review: The Trade in Sharks and Shark Products in the Western Indian and Southern Atlantic Oceans.

ACTIVITY 3.2: SOUTHERN AFRICA SUSTAINABLE USE SPECIALIST GROUP (SASUSG)

1. Sustainable Use Issues and Principles.
2. Summary of the Sustainable Use Issues and Principles.
3. The World Tour of Guardians of Eden, July - October 1996 and the World Conservation Congress 13-24 October 1996, Report
4. Guardians of Eden, Southern Africa Tour, May - June 1997; Tour and Performance report
5. Evaluating Eden Phase One, Synthesis Report, November 1997

REGIONAL INSTITUTIONAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME

Activity 2.1: Environmental Economics

1. Resource Economics Policy Briefs Series: Volume 1, September 1997, Resource Management economics: an overview of uses and applications for policy.
2. Resource Economics Policy Briefs Series: Volume 1, September 1997, Conserving and efficiently allocating water resources through demand management: the potential of emerging policy instruments.
3. Economics and Natural Resource Management: Proceedings of a Workshop held in Maputo, 14-15 October 1996.
4. The Economics, Policy and Natural Resource Management in Southern Africa: Proceedings of Workshop held in Pretoria, South Africa, September 11 to 13 1996.

Activity 1.3: National Training Programmes for Middle level Natural Resource Managers

1. Managing Communal Resources in Namibia Theory and Practice: Report of a Training Course for Natural Resource Managers in Namibia held at Rossing Foundation Adult Centre, Windhoek, Namibia.
2. Post Training Assessment Report: Managing Communal Resources in Namibia: Theory and Practice course: Evaluation .
3. Training Programme, The Social Aspects of Natural Resources Management: A report on the National training programmes for middle level managers in Natural resource Management held in Maputo, Mozambique, 17 March -12 April 1997 (English and Portuguese Versions).
4. Development of a National Training Programme for Middle Level Natural Resource Managers: Report of a Planning Workshop for a Training Course held at the Andrews Motel in Lusaka, Zambia, 18-19 February 1997.
5. Human and Social perspectives in Natural Resources Management Course, Report on the Zambia National Training Programme held at the In-service Training Centre Trust, Lusaka, Zambia, 24 November 1997 to 19 December 1997

Activity 3.1: Environmental Strategies

1. Regional Workshop on Development and implementation of local strategies for sustainability: Proceedings of a Workshop held in Hwange Zimbabwe, 22-26 April 1996.
2. Issues and Challenges in Natural Resource Strategy Development and implementation in Southern Africa: Draft proceedings of a workshop held at Holiday Inn, in Harare, Zimbabwe.

Strategy, Project and Programme Documents

1. USAID/RCSA: Strategic Objective Three: Accelerated Regional Adoption of Sustainable Agriculture and Natural Resource Management Approaches, pp44 to pp70
2. Regional Networking and Capacity Building Initiative for Southern Africa: Programme Document, prepared and submitted by IUCN for USAID/ROSA, September 1995
3. USAID/Zimbabwe: Environment and Natural Resource Management Programme, Strategic Planning Process, Final report of Consultative Workshops, IUCN ROSA, Harare, Zimbabwe, February 1996
4. USAID Zimbabwe Strategic Planning Guidance paper; Attachments I - IV
5. Second Draft, Indicative Project proposal for IUCN-ROSA, NETCAB Programme from Zimbabwe Trust (HARARE), on behalf of Africa Resources trust (ART); Co-ordination and capacity Building Amongst regional NGOs and Community representatives (CBOs) with respect to Conventions Critical to

Conservation-Based Community development(CBCD) Initiatives in Southern Africa.

6. Project Proposal, Enhancing the capacity of Some Non-Governmental Organisations in SADC to Implement Agenda 21, Submitted by Zero to NETCAB, December 1996
7. IUCN Southern Africa Strategic Plan, Version 2, April 1997
8. Revision to NETCAB Programme Document

Agreements / Memorandum of Understanding

1. MOU: IUCN-ROSA and World resources Institute, March 1996
2. MOU: IUCN-ROSA and TRAFFIC East/Southern Africa, February 1996
3. MOU: IUCN-ROSA and national Botanical Institute, February 1996
4. MOU; IUCN-ROSA and SADC Biodiversity Forum, December 1997
5. MOU; IUCN-ROSA and SASUSG, September 1997
6. MOU; IUCN-ROSA and SASUSG, January 1998
7. Modification of Co-operative Agreement for NETCAB; IUCN-ROSA and USAID/RCSA, January 1996

Guidelines and Procedures

1. NETCAB Guidelines
 - General Format for Activity Proposals,
 - Selection Criteria,
 - Fellowship Guidelines,
 - Training Guidelines,
 - Monitoring and Evaluation Guidelines, and
 - NETCAB simplified Accounting manual on USAID Funds
2. TOR for programme Steering Committee (PSC)
3. Procedure for applying for new project/activity proposals in-between PSC sessions

Steering Committee Minutes

1. Minutes SC1, 26 January 1996
2. Minutes SC2, 18 March 1996
3. Minutes SC3, 5 - 6 September 1996
4. Minutes SC4, 9-10 January 1997
5. Minutes SC5, 20 - 21 March 1997
6. Minutes SC6, 4 - 5 September 1997

Workplans and Progress Reports

1. NETCAB, Semi-Annual Workplan October 1995 - March 1996

2. NETCAB, Semi-Annual Workplace April 1996 - September 1996
3. NETCAB, Semi-Annual Workplace October 1996 - March 1997
4. NETCAB, Semi-Annual Workplace April 1997 - September 1997
5. TRAFFIC, Semi-Annual Workplace October 1997 - March 1998
6. ART, Draft Plan of Work February 1997 - July 1998
7. NETCAB, Semi-Annual Progress Report October 1995 - March 1996
8. NETCAB, Semi-Annual Progress Report April 1996 - September 1996
9. NETCAB, Semi-Annual Progress Report October 1996 - March 1997
10. NETCAB, Semi-Annual Progress Report April 1997 - September 1997
11. NETCAB, Project Implementation Review October 1996 - September 1997
12. USAID/ROSA Semi-Annual Activity management Review April 1996 - September 1996
13. IUCN-ROSA Annual Report 1995

Memoranda, Letters and Briefs

1. IUCN Regional Indirect Cost Rate for the Co-operative Agreement No. 623-0251-A-00-48018-00, (from IUCN Finance and Admin. Manager to USAID/RCSA Regional Agreement Officer) January 1998
2. Status report on the Initiative for Southern Africa's Programmes in Agriculture and Natural Resources Management (from USAID/RCSA's SO3 Team to IUCN-ROSA), July 1996
3. NETCAB List of Projects - New Activities

Working Documents

1. NETCAB Project design and Management training Module. December 1997
2. NETCAB Monitoring and Evaluation Plan